Fervent with Wine I went to prayer
A Cup in one hand, Beads the other ;
When the Priest cried with a shrewd air
"Cast down the Cup and enter, Brother !"

(1)

Men in the Mosque all prostrate lay,
All save myself whose head did nod ;
And the priest ordered, "Drive away
That Devil from the House of God !"

(2)

"Forgive this fault in me !" I cried
"Whose meditation was on wine—
One Wineshop here and all who died
Would no doubt find the place divine."

(3)

Amongst them would have been a Priest
More than abashed by your affairs :
You kept your eye on me, and least
On God, while prostrate at your prayers.

(4)

Ah, if you would to Paradise
Aspire, your quickest way would be
To lift the Cup before your eyes,
Not in long prayers said endlessly.

(5)

A priest whose heart is full of hate
And envy, had best walk within
The Tavern's door and not prostrate
Himself, while calling loud on sin.

(6)

Drinking's a sin I do agree—
But you, in holy habit gowned,
Your heart bowed in Idolatry
Deep in the depths of pride lies drowned.

(7)

Enough of sermons in my Youth !
Grown old, I build my paradise :
In Wine there is a pleasant Truth
Better than all your pious lies.

(8)

O put aside your sermons, Friend !
Until my eyes regain their sight
And my intoxication end—
You do confuse the Day with Night.

(9)

Had you but known the force of Love
As I this night have known, you would
Not breathe those empty prayers above,
Nor care in what attire you stood.

(10)

Dear Shaikh, you dwell too much with Pride,
You think too much of creed and caste—
From sperm evolved we do abide
Awhile, to earth confined at last.

(11)

I stand before the Judge's throne
But who shall judge the Judge ? Oh, say
Shall 'Koyes' for 'Laili's' love be shown
Idolatrous to those who pray ?

(12)

In sacrifice his dearest son
Abraham offered. What did you ?
Your pride was as an arrow run
To cleave the Heart of Allah through.

(13)

And if for you the burdened sin
Be great, what theirs who kiss your feet ?
Because Wine warms my heart within
No harm shall come the good to greet.

(14)

You sold your Piety for pelf
And having killed God with your scorn,
How can I worship Him myself ?
Sin's tides fall secret and forlorn.

(15)

How full of Piety you look
With your long beard, dressed all in white !
Down from your shoulder hangs the Book—
Would that your heart held half its light!

(16)

And while your followers devout
Kiss your unwinding turban, you
Sit and mouth sermons, counting out
Your ill-begotten revenue.

(17)

Though you to Vanity aspire
Life is a game for which my breath
Is lowly and without desire,
To leave me pleasured after Death.

(18)

'Wayez' his teeth broke; you have done
A zigzag through mistaken ways ;
I drink, because Love's web is spun
So fine, and clarify my gaze.

(19)

I search for my Beloved whose
Shadow is by me through the Night—
How many Cups my soul confuse
Until 'Bilal' breaks with the light !

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How many Cups my soul confuse
Until 'Bilal' breaks with the light !
(20)

O my dear friend, you need not laugh—
A Lover's curse is trebly strong !
Brief though may be the Cup I quaff,
Your world-illusions last too long.
(21)

Why should I wait for Paradise
Who can enjoy it now on earth ?
Youth's lovely Rose before it dies
Yields riches of unequalled worth !
(22)

I seek no Heaven, fear no Hell ;
Intoxicated, peace is mine ;
'Quran' and 'Hadith' cast no spell ;
To pray for Houris I decline.
(23)

You call me 'Kafir' my dear friend,
Enough to damn me in the Pit ;
And that, you say, should be my end,
While you for Paradise are fit.
(24)

You lash me with your cruel thongs.
Vanity is your greater part—
Why charge the innocent with wrongs
And harass them of humble heart ?
(25)

The Al-Quran you have forgot,
Jesus and Moses both denied—
You only help, as like as not,
'Sunni' and 'Shia' to divide.
(26)

Obedience the Priest ordained
For any who would Heaven know ;
But I am one who have abstained
And now must as a Rebel go.
(27)

My master, how can I resist
The Flame of Beauty you created ?
You gave me Wine and yet insist
My Thirst must never be abated !
(28)

For one mistake—such was my fate,
I lost. Are sins mistakes as well ?
Did He Himself not indicate
Which way to Heaven or to Hell !
(29)

Since Allah everything did plan,
He also knew that one among
The Angels would not bow to Man,
Who for this down to earth was flung.
(30)

Eve was to Adam sent as Mate
Whom he might cherish but not touch ;
But since God planned to populate
The earth, where is the sin as such ?
(31)

Behold Him seated on the Throne—
Pleasant the Wine ! but he who dies
In sin, or at the last atone,
May be too late for Paradise.
(32)

Virtue and Vice are both the same,
When will you try to understand ?
There was deception in God's game,
At the beginning it was planned.
(33)

Repent, repent ! consult the Book
And judge not—by His holy breath !
In every Heart one Judge shall look
One day beyond the Sleep of Death.
(34)

Halfway you go your God to meet ;
And only walk the path that's wide ;
Robed all in white from head to feet
Prostrate you pray all night with pride.
(35)

You and the priesthood have debased
A true tradition to black lies ;
Higher than God yourself you placed—
Cold, without Wine, the spirit dies !
(36)

O Priest, step not beyond that mark
The Prophet warned, but sip with me
A little Wine. Perchance the dark
Will lift, the path much clearer be.
(37)

You of 'Bilal' the story tell
To whom the Prophet gave release ;
In luxury at home you dwell,
While I am tortured without cease.
(38)

Elsewhere the Bird of Dawn, the Lark
Is singing, while your sins increase.
Out of the death-trap of the dark
Arise ! and find the path to peace.
(39)

You taunt me with your bitterness
And damn my sou each time you pray ;
As Emperor you more or less
Think Heaven all yours to obey !
(40)

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Which by your eyes was set on fire :
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To me completely and entire !

(51)

Had I but known in this brief life
I could not hold you, nor the next,
You would failed to stir to strife
My pining heart with such pretext.

(52)

O Saki ! hear my last appeal !
If death a Lover would escape
And in his heart fresh flowers feel,
Drink then the pure juice of the Grape.

(53)

Thief of my heart ! do what you will,
For love's reward is sorrow's pain ;
My heart what virtue yours to kill
When jasmin dawn shall break—in vain ?

(54)

My luck was shattered by despair
The very day I called your name :
Though flowers fade in the hot air,
And droop, their perfume smells the same,

(55)

Whatever pain I gave to you
Should you return it, how can I
Offer you homage as your due,
Or think you Higher than the High ?

(56)

You call and call me ! I am spent
With weariness. The slow hours creep ;
Tomorrow I must pitch my tent
Who only have one wish to sleep !

(57)

Dearer to me than Paradise
The memory of your fair face !
Like nodding leaves your slumbrous eyes,
Like lotus bloom your body's grace.

(58)

And should I not escape your gin
O will you heed my dying shout ?
For wrongs done when the tides came in,
What pardon is there going out ?

(59)

Before I die and my lips tell
That you not love me, will you give
One sip, or in that last farewell
The empty Cup while I still live ?

(60)

You with your insults did your best
But all in vain to bring me low,
In truth you had no interest
Nor even cared my name to know.

(41)

Long in the wrong direction strayed
My soul, while waiting sang my Bride
Weaving a garland must fade,
Tarry I longer from his side.

(42)

Fill the Cup, Saki, with the least
Wine that is left. My message give
To my Beloved, "I have ceased
On earth with worldliness to live",

(43)

Priest ! touch me not who night and day
Have tortured with dire excess :
Lo ! at my funeral shall pray
The Angels and the Prophet bless.

(44)

O drink what's left with little sips.
For latter when the 'Muazzin' calls
Can I be certain of your lips
When on your face the first light falls ?

(45)

Fools sleep inside the darkened room,
Love in the moonlit garden plays ;
Had they but kissed you once, what doom
Darker than death had sealed their days !

(46)

They deem me mad—how they shall fret
Who ne'er intoxication knew !
One last sip I will ask for yet,
For them the desert, no such brew,

(47)

Bereft of senses now I sleep
With my Beloved. All I crave
Is that my friends at Dawn shall keep
My empty Cup there on the grave.

(48)

How could I from the arrow of
Your eyes, my mortal heart defend ?
How dare endure the arms of loves
And meet my Lover at the end ?

(49)

Whether in bridal room you wait,
I know not : in my heart you shine ;
And even though despair's my fate,
Desire takes on your form Divine.

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Had I but kissed your petalled cheek
I could have slept eternally,
And if your heart had learned to speak
To mine, my sins had ceased to be.

(61)

What scent of 'henna' in the air—
Or is it in your hair, Dear Heart?
O who knows how and who knows where
The zephyrs sigh as they depart.

(62)

Beloved, I can bear no more!
All my illusions leave me save
Your flashing eyes, the thunder's roar,
My heart aspiring to the grave.

(63)

Have you no mercy left for me,
No comfort? Must your cruel jokes
Destroy my senses utterly?
Is your love nothing but a hoax?

(64)

My bitter cry you can not blame
If you, like me, had loved and lost;
To torture me in mercy's name
Appears to suit your nature most.

(65)

You break the lamp that you have made
You kindle it, and snuff the light:
Such are the pranks that you have played
Peace like a Bird has taken flight.

(66)

Gold palaces you gave to some
But I no roof have for my head;
Entreat me not to beg a crumb!
Houris are hardly hunger's bread.

(67)

I glimpsed in dreams your Beauty first
While in my hand the garland was:
O cruel you, O me accursed!
To whom the garland give, alas!

(68)

I beg this garland that you wear
When wakeful dawn your heart shall see:
But for it if you do not care,
Then hang it on the willow tree.

(69)

Be quick and hand to me the Cup!
Israfel's horn's about to blow;
My shivering soul like smoke goes up
As crystal clear the heavens grow.

(70)

Exhausted is life's little day—
How long my grief-infested heart?
I weary of your cruel play
And sorrow bursts my ribs apart.

(71)

If you are Nothing, Nothing is
Your Love, who have for Nothing brought
Grief to my heart. Only Wine's bliss
The truth holds and the rest is Nought.

(72)

Pluck then my heart-strings, play the lute!
Only the mystic really knows
Your virgin Beauty. Let's be mute
Nor argue how the spirit grows.

(73)

Lift the veil 'Laila'; Mujnun's weeping:
Paradies surely yours to win!
God has all beauty in His keeping,
Beauty is light and darkness sin.

(74)

Sweet in content in Paradies;
In Hall there's nothing but despair:
With beauty any heart grows wise,
But shrink it must when sin is there.

(75)

Smile, Darling, though it spell my death,
And let my heart dissolve in sorrow;
One smile of yours to charm my breath
And drive away despair tomorrow!

(76)

I searched for you where you had gone
Through the dark lanes. That glance of yours,
Was it of love? You hurry on
And hide behind a hundred doors!

(77)

You lured me on till my distress
Confused all sense of best and worst;
You lured me to the wilderness,
And mocked me as I dropped of thirst.

(78)

Had you been kind to me, my Dear,
Nor found Illusions on the way,
Repentent you at dawn might hear
Sad music heralding the day.

(79)

O heartless you! Since you persist
Let me endure with no word said,
Sorrow shall be my Alchemist
Transmuting love from common lead.

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Had I but kissed your petalled cheek
I could have slept eternally,
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In Hall there's nothing but despair :
With beauty any heart grows wise,
But shrink it must when sin is there.

(75)

Smile, Darling, though it spell my death,
And let my heart dissolve in sorrow ;
One smile of yours to charm my breath
And drive away despair tomorrow.

(76)

I searched for you where you had gone
Through the dark lanes. That glance of yours,
Was it of love ? You hurry on
And hide behind a hundred doors !

(77)

You lured me on till my distress
Confused all sense of best and worst ;
You lured me to the wilderness,
And mocked me as I dropped of thirst.

(78)

Had you been kind to me, my Dear,
Nor found Illusions on the way,
Repentent you at dawn might hear
Sad music heralding the day.

(79)

O heartless you ! Since you persist
Let me endure with no word said,
Sorrow shall be my Alchemist
Transmuting love from common lead.

(80)

On that last ferry as you left
I heard the Owl at night complain :
Of my last kiss you were bereft
That might have helped to ease my pain.

(81)

Sorrow has plucked my lute's sad strings
And shaped the Beauty of your form ;
Memory swept my heart with wings
Like trees that bend before a storm.

(82)

One moment passed : I was alone
To mourn your loss a thousand years !
And for this must I still atone
Until at last the Cup appears.

(83)

With Khijir countless years have fled;
And likewise you for whom I yearn :
The Cup you hold with wine is red,
But empty-handed I return.

(84)

Your promises belie my fate !
I doubt if ever we shall meet
In after life. Love comes too late
When earthly life has proved a cheat.

(85)

In all my earthly wanderings
You hid behind a thousand veils !
What pious souls and saints and kings
You have made mad ! My own voice fails.

(86)

You wonder will the wine be there,
The Cup and peace there in the grave ?
You ask me, shall I find you fair
Or will the Houris me enslave ?

(87)

O by my troth to you I swear
Though Houris have beguilings ways,
Your Image in my heart I bear
To which my blood sings endless praise.

(88)

What matters that you love me not
So long as in my heart I keep
Your Image. When the veil's forgot
Shall you not for repentence weep ?

(89)

Was it to hoax me that you said
You would be near me at the end ?
Had this been written on my head
The[illegible]ver flows for nothing, Friend.

(90)

My lot was by your love designed,
My sins predestined from the Fall :
Could you no reparation find
Who silent sit and watch it all ?

(91)

If Time with Sleep your eyelids seal,
Then have I lived my life in vain ;
In this dark room Dawn shall reveal
The empty bed where you have lain.

(92)

Behind your saree you who hide
And simper, madden me at will ;
With shooting glances you deride—
I wished the arrows pierced to kill !

(93)

Perdition mine if I forget
Your face more perfect than the rose !
Cold is your touch that lingers yet
And brings both rapture and repose.

(94)

You whispered you would come to me,
Why then the promise still defer ?
Long since I should have turned the key
And locked you in as prisoner !

(95)

While "Laila" in her Prison weeps,
Knocks "Majnun" loudly on the door :
Whose is the sin ? Destruction keeps
The watch in ways we walk no more.

(96)

At dusk I see her smile depart,
With anklets jingling at her feet
Into the courtyard of my heart
She dances—but we never meet !

(97)

I dream at night we are afloat,
Beside me is the jar of Wine
And my Beloved ; but the boat
Blown windward sinks beneath the brine.

(98)

I walk down alleyway and street,
By some abused and struck by some ;
Though far horizons me entreat
Forced back to you I always come.

(99)

I hear within a Voice that has
No answer from the World without :
Like musk is love I seek, alas !
Deep-centred in the heart, no doubt.

(100)

On that last ferry as you left
I heard the Owl at night complain :
Of my last kiss you were bereft
That might have helped to ease my pain.
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Shall you not for repentence weep ?
(89)

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You would be near me at the end ?
Had this been written on my head
The river flows for nothing, Friend.
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Could you no reparation find
Who silent sit and watch it all ?
(91)

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Deep-centred in the heart, no doubt.
(100)

In blue savannahs I am lost,
Asleep in my Beloved's arms ;
My heart that is by passion tossed
The utterance of "Mansur" charms.
(101)

When Day is shut in shades of Night
What palaces with gems are set !
I hear, as Absolutes unite,
The call from Kaaba's minaret.
(102)

When ends at last all enmity
Between Desire and Love, I know
With all possessions lost to me,
That as a pauper I shall go.
(103)

Well [illegible]ugh it started it went wrong :
Fo[illegible]those many winding ways
Which I, in blindness, walked along
Led to the middle of the maze.
(104)

I [illegible] to see Her, night and day—
[illegible]ce would [illegible]
To kiss Her feet upon the way,
And none more happily than I !
(105)

To gain in death what life denied
I suffered many grievous woes :
Each entry on the debit side
The Ledger all too clearly shows.
(106)

While "Laila" lies within the tomb,
Deep in the dust my Love reposes.
Mohammad's garden there to bloom,
O tear-veiled rose of all the roses.
(107)

Much do I question what is life
And which the way lies to success ;
Whence come or go we, what the strife,
Who were conceived in shamefulness.
(108)

The star of dawn recalls my Love
Where with her beauty spot accords :
Between her brows so bright above,
A star gleams radiant with swords.
(109)

Poor traveller in dreamland I,
To whom all days and nights are one !
Caged in despair my hopes still fly,
But hope of heaven there is none.
(110)

Why did you on your journey build
A house in which to rest awhile ?
Beyond it Destiny has willed
A welcome—your Beloved's smile !
(111)

Made mad by beauty I am worn
Away, and all my wounds increase ;
What torture more than mine was borne
For whom all earthly joys must cease ?
(112)

Love is a vampire that has fed
Upon my heart. Physicians stand
And have no cure, while it is said
No greater drunkard walks the land.
(113)

When love's disease has undermined
The body, how it wastes away !
Take heed, my Sons ! for who can find
A cure for this accursed decay ?
(114)

Who sits beside the tree and tunes
His [illegible] restless rhythm flows
In flood tides from my heart that swoons
To meet the perfect love it knows.
(115)

You called me early in the morn—
But who could wipe away these tears ?
How could I know the rose's thorn
Would stab this heart in my green years ?
(116)

O take my message, Breeze, and run
To my Beloved. Heart, awake !
For waves have in my breast begun
To swell, and there with grief to break.
(117)

This life is empty as a Cup
That holds no wine ; and in the dust
My Love lies ; and the wind springs up,
And through my heart a spear is thrust.
(118)

I heard in sleep that Voice before,
But Love has left me, Memory gone :
I lit a candle. At the door
The moon was smiling, sad and wan.
(119)

The storm that woke me with its stress
Has swept between us. Could this be
In envy of my happiness ?
Shall God, who love gave, take from me ?
(120)

What made me in mid-ocean drown
With none to help me to the shore?
Must God on His creation frown
And mock man's hopes for evermore?
(121)

Against my fate with no effect
I strove since first my life began;
But now I know what to expect—
Both good and bad are meted man.
(122)

I kept my sins a secret so
Others might not behave the same;
In Virtue's ways I did not go
But still for me they Virtue claim.
(123)

No hope have I and fall a-weeping
To see my boat in ocean sink;
I into Nothingness am creeping
While others shudder on the brink.
(124)

My life is in your Hands, so why
Attempt at hide and seek to play?
Despair is mine now death draws nigh,
Your Mercy dead that lived a day.
(125)

Weep not mid-way upon the course,
At the eleventh hour decline
Virtu[illegible]nd vice. My soul, rejoice!
Thr[illegible]gh Paradise still runs the Wine.
(126)

Di[illegible] God decree the pauper's role
With gardens red with roses rife?
Keep fresh the flowers Oh my soul!
Smile, Brother, on the brink of life.
(127)

[illegible]haikh, you dwell too much with Pride,
[illegible]u think too much of creed and caste—
[illegible]m sperm evolved we do abide
And [illegible]re to earth confined at last.
(11)

Oh [illegible]ut aside your sermons, Friend!
U[illegible] my eyes regain their sight
And my intoxication end—
You do confuse the Day with Night.
(9)

With ashes has my heart been sealed
That by your eyes was set on fire;
Oh, had your Beauty been revealed
To me completely and entire!
(51)

Had I but known in this brief life
I could not hold you, nor the next,
You would have failed to stir to strife
My pining heart with such pretext.
(52)

Before I die and my lips tell
You do not love me, will you give
One sip, or in that last farewell
The empty Cup while I still live?
(60)

Long in the wrong direction strayed
My soul, while waiting sang my Bride
Weaving a garland that must fade,
Tarry I longer from her side.
(42)

Priest! touch me not who night and day
Have tortured me with dire excess:
Lo! at my funeral shall pray
The Angels, and the Prophet bless.
(44)

Oh drink what's left with little sips,
For later when the 'Muazzins' calls
I shall not breathe your perfumed lips,
When on your face the first light falls
(45)

Whether in bridal room you wait,
I know not: in my heart you shine;
And even though Despair's my fate,
Desire takes on your form Divine.
(50)

Lift the veil 'Laila'; Mujnun's weeping:
Paradise surely yours to win!
God has all beauty in His keeping,
Beauty is light and darkness sin.
(74)

Sweet is content in Paradise;
In Hell there's nothing but despair:
With beauty any heart grows wise,
But shrink it must when sin is there.
(75)

Smile, Darling, though it spell my death,
And let my heart dissolve in sorrow;
One smile of yours to charm my breath
Will drive away despair tomorrow!
(76)

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